

Department of Health – State Board Vacancies – November 2013

***interim* Optical Registration Board**

Appointment of members to the *interim* Optical Registration Board

In accordance with the Government's programme of rationalisation of State agencies, the process of subsuming the Opticians Board into the Health and Social Care Professionals Council (HSCPC) is underway. The Minister for Health will shortly establish an *interim* Optical Registration Board, on a non-statutory basis, until such time as legislation is enacted to dissolve the Opticians Board and to establish an Optical Registration Boardⁱ under the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 (the Act) to regulate the professions of optometrist and dispensing optician. In the meantime, the Opticians Board, established under the Opticians Act 1956, remains extant and retains all its statutory functions.

Following the Government decision to widen the opportunity for board membership of State bodies, the Minister for Health, Dr. James Reilly, TD, invites expressions of interest from suitably qualified and experienced persons interested in being appointed to the *interim* Optical Registration Board. It is intended that the persons appointed to the interim board will be appointed to the Optical Registration Board to be established under the Act when the amending legislation is enacted during 2014.

Background Information

CORU is the umbrella term used to describe the Health and Social Care Professionals Council and the registration boards established under the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005.

The 12 designated professions are (a) Clinical Biochemists; (b) Dietitians; (c) Medical Scientists; (d) Occupational Therapists; (e) Orthoptists; (f) Physiotherapists; (g) Podiatrists; (h) Psychologists; (i) Radiographers; (j) Social Care Workers; (k) Social Workers; and (l) Speech and Language Therapists.

Each registration board consists of 13 members with responsibility for registration and education functions. The Council oversees and co-ordinates the work of the registration boards to ensure consistency and effectiveness in CORU's regulatory regime.

The Optical Registration Board will be added to this group in compliance with the Government Decision on the rationalisation of State Agencies and after the passing of the necessary legislative amendments.

Functions of a Registration Board under the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005

The object of a registration board is to protect the public by fostering high standards of professional conduct and professional education, training and competence amongst registrants of the profession. Its functions will include

- Establishing and maintaining a register of members of the relevant profession(s)
- Deciding on applications for registration and issuing certificates of registration
- Setting the standards of performance and the code of conduct and ethics expected of registrants
- Giving guidance to registrants concerning
 - ethical conduct
 - practice of the profession
 - continuing professional development
- Monitoring the continuing suitability of programmes for the education & training of applicants for registration
- Approving new courses
- Approving qualifications
- Making recommendations with respect to sanctions in Fitness to Practice cases
- With the approval of the Council, conducting research into education & training relating to the practice of the profession
- Maintaining statistical records which must be available for research & planning
- Recognising qualifications gained outside the state in the boards function of Competent Authority

A registration board will have collective responsibility to the public in the performance of its duties.

Role of the *interim* Optical Registration Board

Legislative amendments to the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 are required before the Optical Registration Board can be established. The Minister for Health, however, intends to appoint an *interim* Optical Registration Board until such time as he can formally establish and appoint an Optical Registration Board.

Much of the work of the *interim* Optical Registration Board, governed by CORU, will be to prepare in advance and as far as possible for the establishment of the Optical Registration Board. This will include drafting bye-laws, drafting codes of conduct and ethics and assisting with preparations for transition.

Membership of the *interim* Optical Registration Board

Six persons of whom,

- three are to be persons who are engaged in the practice of one of the designated professions,
- two are to be persons who are engaged, as members of one of the designated professions, in the management of services provided by it, and
- one is to be a person who is engaged in the State in the education and training of persons with respect to the practice of the profession of optometrist.

Seven members of whom

- one is to be representative of the management of the public health sector, the social care sector or both sectors,
- one is to be representative of the management of a voluntary or private sector organisation concerned with health or social care,
- one is to be representative of third level educational establishments in the State involved in the education and training of persons in the practice of the designated profession of optometrist (this person is to be nominated by the Minister for Education and Skills)
- four are to be representative of the interests of the general public.

Term of Office

Members of a registration board hold office for a term of up to 4 years from the date of his/her formal appointment. No person may hold office as a member of a registration board for more than 2 consecutive terms.

One half of the members of a registration board first constituted under the Act hold office for the term of two years from the date of their appointment. The members who are to hold office for a term of two years shall be drawn by lot.

A registration board may elect one of its members to be its chairperson.

Probity and Conflict of Interest

Board members on appointment assume significant duties such as responsibility for the proper conduct of the registration board's affairs, to hold confidential information obtained in the course of their role as board member and to act in accordance with public policy and high standards of probity.

In order to qualify for appointment a person must not have any conflicts of interest likely to interfere with his/her ability to play a full part on the board. Confidentiality is a key element to the work of a board member.

Role description and person specification

The variety of issues to be dealt with will require board members that can add value through knowledge, experience or expertise gained in their current or previous roles. This will involve the ability to balance a strategic view of key decisions with a specialist or expert perspective, while being committed to the principle of collective decision making that underpins the Board's role. It will also require understanding and experience of what it takes to develop a well-run, responsive and high performing public sector organisation. Having some appreciation of the environment in which the Registration Board operates and being patient/service user focused is desirable.

Skills

In order to carry out the functions of members of the *interim* Optical Registration Board it is necessary that members should have skills or expertise in **some or all** of the following areas:

- A knowledge and/or experience of the Irish health and social care system, including an awareness of emerging developments in health and social care research and practice
- An understanding of the issues involved in delivering optical services
- An understanding of educational approval and monitoring requirements in health and social care education
- A knowledge and appreciation of good corporate governance practices
- Experience of strategic management and managing organisational change
- Experience of chairing a group, and working effectively as part of a committee to reach sound solutions to problems or of working in a partnership environment
- Focus on patient/service user safety and clinical governance issues broadly
- Strategic awareness of the wider social, political, economic context in which the health/social care sector sits
- Have experience of working in a regulatory/ regulated environment / service
- Have experience of policy development in particular in areas of governance and risk
- Have a proven record of management in the public health /social care sector as required
- The ability to articulate and advocate the views, concerns and expectations of consumers especially those who have experience as users of optical services.

Time Commitment and Remuneration

Successful applicants will be expected to attend up to ten board meetings each year and members may also be nominated by the board to serve on sub-committees of the Board/Council. Members will be required to devote as much time to duties of the board as necessary for the proper and efficient discharge of their duties. This will include time in preparation for board meetings and attending and preparing for board committee meetings, stakeholder meetings and events and other ad hoc meetings as required. By applying for the position it is assumed that you can meet this time commitment.

Members are obliged to comply with the relevant provisions of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. This Code includes a description of the role and responsibilities of board members

Members will serve on a part-time basis and there is no remuneration for the positions. However, members are entitled to claim travel and subsistence allowances which will be paid in respect of journeys undertaken to attend meetings of the board or to transact its business, in accordance with approved public sector rates.

Meetings are usually held at CORU offices located in Sandyford, Dublin 18. Most communication between the Council and registration boards is electronic and a willingness to accept this method of communication is desirable.

Training

Appropriate induction training will be provided to all new members

Appointment process

The Department is committed to the principles of public appointments based on merit, with independent assessment, openness and transparency. By submitting an expression of interest the applicant accepts that appointments are made in the exercise of a statutory discretion, that the Minister is not obliged to consider the expressions of interest offered, that he is not confined to recommending an appointment from amongst those who have expressed an interest and is not bound by any statement set out in the notice.

How to Apply

You should submit an application form via the following link: www.publicjobs.ie
If you are already registered on www.publicjobs.ie you can log in using your username and password.

If you have not previously registered on www.publicjobs.ie you will need to register your details.

You must go to “Choose a Job Category” on the left side of the screen.

Click on “Membership of a State Board” and then click “Apply for this job”.

Please note that documents a) – b) below should be submitted as one attachment and should be saved in one document before commencing the application process.

Step 1 - Complete the Online Application Form. Most of this will be pre-filled from your registration profile.

Step 2- Attach a) – b) listed below

- (a) A short cover letter outlining why you wish to be considered for a position on the Board.
- (b) The Competency Questionnaire which is located in the Additional Information section of the advertisement page. Please copy and save this format in a separate document.

Applications will be accepted up to and including **Tuesday 3rd December 2013.**

Results will issue to candidates through the www.publicjobs.ie messageboard. All applications/expressions of interest will be treated confidentially and information will only be given to the appropriate personnel.

Further Information

Further information on the work of the Health and Social Care Professionals Council and registration boards is available on CORU’s website: www.coru.ie.

ⁱ Working title, pending finalisation of drafting of legislation